

News Release



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AMPLEHARVEST.ORG CAMPAIGN MARKS ITS TWO YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Only two years old, AmpleHarvest.org now helping nearly 4,000 food pantries across all 50 states become "visible" to local growers with excess garden produce.

For Immediate Release

West Milford, NJ – (May 23 2011) – The AmpleHarvest.org Campaign, created by CNN Hero Gary Oppenheimer in March 2009 and rolled out nationally seven weeks later in May 2009 is celebrating its second birthday.

The AmpleHarvest.org Campaign was originally created to help growers share their garden bounty with those in need by providing an online clearing house (www.AmpleHarvest.org) to find neighborhood food pantries accepting donations of fresh produce. Nearly 4,000 food pantries (more than 1 out of every 10 in America) spread across all fifty states have registered on the free site and more are signing up daily. A national map of the registered food pantries can be viewed at www.AmpleHarvest.org/map.

Created by a small team of volunteers and assisted by many organizations including Google Inc., the USDA, National Gardening Association, National Council of Churches and most recently, GreenFaith, the AmpleHarvest.org Campaign has been working to help neighborhood food pantries (also called food closets, food cupboards, food shelves or even food banks in some parts of the country) become visible to local gardeners at harvest time.

According to founder Gary Oppenheimer, "more than 50 million Americans including 1 out of 4 children under the age of six are food insecure, a fancy way of saying that they are hungry or are at real risk of becoming hungry. At the same time, more than 40 million people grow food in home gardens, often more than they can use, preserve or give to friends. It doesn't have to be that way. Our goal is to enable these millions of

gardeners to easily find a neighborhood food pantry eager for their excess garden produce. Fresh produce is almost never available at food pantries.

“Gardeners historically have not donated their excess garden produce because they did not know where they could donate (food pantries are usually located in a house or worship or other civic building without a prominent store front, sign or Internet presence) and many food pantries were not willing to accept produce because they lacked the refrigeration they thought they’d need. AmpleHarvest.org solves both of these problems by creating an easy to use national registry of pantries and by enabling the food pantries to receive and distribute the produce on a same day/next day basis... solving the refrigeration issue. In short, AmpleHarvest.org diminishes hunger in America not by supplying more food but by using the Internet to insure the best possible use of already available local food sources.”

The opportunity for home gardens to help food pantries nationwide is significant said Oppenheimer. “Last August when AmpleHarvest.org was only 15 months old, the 460 food pantries that responded to our survey reported collectively receiving in excess of 700,000 pounds of locally grown garden produce, and it was only the middle of the growing season.”

AmpleHarvest.org has a stated goal of having 10,000 food pantries or about 1 out of every 3 in America, registered within three years. “It is our goal to enable any gardener anywhere in the country to easily find a neighborhood food pantry when they end up harvesting more from their garden than they can use. This is key to our vision of ‘no food left behind’” commented Oppenheimer.

About AmpleHarvest.org, Inc.

AmpleHarvest.org, Inc. is a not-for-profit 501c3 charity which has received backing and support from the US Department of Agriculture, Google, Inc., National Gardening Association, the Garden Writers of America, Rotary International, National Council of Churches, Veterans of Foreign Wars and numerous faith groups. The AmpleHarvest.org Campaign works to diminish hunger in America by enabling gardeners to easily find a local food pantry eager to receive the excess garden bounty. For more information on the campaign, visit www.AmpleHarvest.org/press or call AMPLE-6-9880 (267-536-9880).

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